

25 October 1983

Office of Personnel Five Year Plan

Introduction:

1. The Agency has experienced an unusually low attrition rate in comparison to other government agencies, but managers should anticipate increases in personnel turnover. The Agency will be affected by the worsening comparability of Federal pay and benefits compared to the private sector. The prospect of foreign service is no longer as attractive to applicants as it once was. The greater prevalence of two-income families is affecting the selection of an employer and the ability to accept assignments that require a change of location. Increasing portability of retirement and health benefits may "unlock" employees who are now committed to Agency or Federal careers to assure their benefits. The growth of Agency programs is creating an increasing requirement for employees with engineering/technical/ADP skills who function as specialists in an environment that still tends to encourage "generalists" and who have alternative employment opportunities.

Assumptions:

2. The workload of the Office of Personnel is primarily affected by change in the size of the total employee population that is served and by changes in the annual level of EODs that is required for replacement and strength augmentation. About three-fourths of the Office relates to the first factor and about one-fourth to the second.

3. The Federal career is perceived as being less attractive than it has been in the past. Federal reductions have weakened the perception of job security. Pay compression and pay lids seem a way of life. The costs of benefits to the employee have risen and the value of benefits has been reduced. Uncertainties abound as to what retirement benefits the employee can expect when finally ready to retire.

4. The trend in Federal employee benefits is continually reducing the "locked in" factor for Agency employees. Historically, retirement plans and health benefits have not been portable and this has facilitated the retention of the employee with five years or more service. The extension of Medicare, Social Security, and Individual Retirement Plans to Federal employees will increase the portability of key benefits and make it less of a sacrifice to resign to enter the private sector.

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5. The increasing devaluation of the U.S. dollar and a spreading adverse, or even militant, attitude toward Americans will make it more difficult to recruit for work overseas and to assign these employees already on duty.

6. The growing prevalence of the two-income family will affect employee assignment and even retention. The Agency already is seeing the impact on overseas and domestic assignments. The retention of employees can be affected by the reassignment of an "outside" spouse. Circumstances leading to the resignation of an Agency employee may also lead to the resignation of a spouse who works for the Agency. (Double separations have been a recent phenomenon.)

7. The growth of dual Agency careers for Agency employees and their spouses will present the Agency with increasing problems involving dual assignments overseas, separated tours, or the preservation of the dormant career of an accompanying spouse. In addition, the increased numbers of qualified women in skilled Agency positions increases the likelihood of both spouses having careers in the Agency.

8. Changing societal values will result in more changes in the values of recently hired employees when compared to employees hired in past years. Employees are more likely to question the desirability of assignments than they were in past years. These questions involve not only career issues but domestic circumstances. Family satisfaction with facilities and services is now a much bigger issue in assignments involving relocations. As a result of these changes, the Agency will be increasingly faced with meeting employee demands for career satisfaction as well as family support in accomplishing employee reassignments.

9. Technical-scientific skills will figure prominently in Agency recruitment. Unfortunately, specialists will continue to have difficulty competing with generalists for assignments and promotions. This affects retention and consequently the outside perception of the Agency as a good place to work. In view of the growing need for specialized skills in all job markets, outside competition can be expected to be intense.

10. The continual easing of ethical and moral standards in our society will require the Agency to spend relatively more resources to find qualified applicants who meet our security and medical standards.

11. Promotion rates can be expected to drop precipitously. A slowdown in the Agency's buildup, the new Federal emphasis on discouraging early retirement, a discouraging environment for second careers, and growing pressure to permit workers to work as long as they are capable will all have the effect of raising the average retirement age for Agency employees. This in turn, by reducing retirements, will reduce the promotion rate. Disappointed employees may seek alternative employment. It is thus quite possible that retirement rates may stay low while resignation rates rise.

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12. It will be necessary to upgrade or replace the PERSIGN and related data base systems and to enlarge the field of data elements recorded on-line and in electronic storage. Data support to components has burgeoned and will continue to increase. Additional analytic methodologies will be required by management to monitor hiring and promotion practices. Some R&D funding for the development of such methodologies will be required. The current drive to provide decentralized access (read-only) to the central data base will have future budgetary implications and will affect the skills required of personnel officers.

Goals:

13. Acquire and retain a high-quality, representative (minority, women) work force.

14. Develop personnel management systems which reflect the current trend toward a greater degree of mobility in and out of the Agency and recognize the need for both career and short-term employees to meet personnel staffing levels.

15. Review and upgrade the Agency's benefits package and inform employees fully of their available benefits.

16. Keep Agency compensation competitive, including the upper grades.

17. Develop an improved performance awards system.

18. Develop a special corps of cross-trained managers who can manage Agency specialists in production, collection, and administration, or functional specialists (such as personnel managers cross-trained in personnel administration, data base management, planning, and quantitative analysis).

19. Initiate actions to recapture and preserve the Agency's very special environment that stresses teamwork, accomplishment, worth, and organizational vitality. It demands much and receives much from employees in return for an employer that is aware of the unique problems faced by its employees, makes an extra effort on their behalf, and enhances job satisfactions.

20. Develop and apply productivity measures where relevant.

21. Create incentives for managers to focus on and improve productivity. The system now tends to work against the manager who does more with less. If the unit is smaller, it may work against the grade allocated for the manager's position. Conversely, the manager who is expanding the unit may receive a higher grade allocation.

22. Design a program to respond to a crisis or a change of policy which dictates a rapid buildup (surge capability) in some function whether it be employment, operations, etc. The reserve program should be fostered, while pursuing other options such as tracking the current occupations of our retirees, using retirees on a part-time basis, and job-sharing.

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23. Increase the portion of the OP budget for non-personnel items, such as ADP support, office equipment, applicant travel, advertising, and R&D into new methodologies.

24. Increase the employees resources of the central Office of Personnel, in proportion to the manpower increases in the rest of the Agency, as well as increasing the number of personnel officers assigned to the components roughly in proportion to the increase in Agency size. Create an Office of Personnel development complement, in addition to the strength level required for central functions, to accommodate the necessary training of new officers.

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SUBJECT: (Optional)

Office of Personnel Five Year Plan

FROM:

1012 Ames

EXTENSION

NO.

DATE

26 October 1983

TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)

DATE

RECEIVED

FORWARDED

OFFICER'S INITIALS

COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)

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| 1. | | | | <p>Attached is a copy of an Office of Personnel Five Year Plan that PA&E has modified and distilled from previous OP planning efforts. It has been developed for submission to the DDA, along with concomitant FY 1984 objectives for OP. It is requested that your proposed objectives, along with projected dates for completion milestones, be provided to PA&E by COB 2 Nov. 1983. Please provide a brief description of the FY 1984 objectives proposed for your area, under the general guidance of the OP Five Year Plan. We will then consolidate an OP package for the DDA's use in monitoring our FY 1984 progress.</p> <p>PA&E will be available to respond to any questions you might have, regarding our MBO exercise, at the OP/PMC on 27 Oct. 1983.</p> |
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